

The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St SW
Washington, D.C. 20536
The Honorable John Thune
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20510
The Honorable Bill Nelson
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Pai and Senators Thune and Nelson,

Protecting net neutrality is crucial to ensuring that the internet remains a central driver of economic growth and opportunity, job creation, education, free expression, and civic organizing for everyone. The principles of net neutrality—that all data on the internet should be treated equally, and internet service providers (ISPs) should not discriminate or provide preference to any data, regardless of its source, content, or destination—are the foundation that has made the internet the engine of opportunity it is today. The continuation of net neutrality is essential to the continued growth of the country and to ensuring access to social, political, and economic empowerment for all.

In 2015, millions of people made their support for net neutrality clear in comments to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) supporting the *Open Internet Order*. The order, which reclassified broadband internet under Title II, enshrined the principles of net neutrality in law, and gave the FCC the authority to enforce it. As a result, broadband providers cannot block users' access to content, slow down connections to services, or charge for speedier delivery of preferred content.

Since the order went into effect, broadband infrastructure investment is up, ISP revenues are at record highs, and businesses continue developing innovative ideas and offerings. A [2016 report](#) found that the total capital expenditures of ISPs increased by 4 percent and that total revenues increased by 5 percent from 2014 to 2015. Moreover, we consistently see businesses innovate and create new ways to provide fresh content and better services to consumers.

I urge you and your colleagues to oppose legislation and regulatory actions that would threaten net neutrality and roll back the important protections put in place by the FCC in 2015, and to continue to enforce the *Open Internet Order* as it stands.

Net neutrality supports and protects these basic values:

- **Competition:** Net neutrality helps to ensure that all companies, from small startups to larger companies, have equal access to consumers online. It allows companies to fairly compete for customers within their market and incentivizes the development of new services and tools for consumers. This competition is the engine of the U.S. economy, and should be promoted.
- **Innovation:** Net neutrality makes it possible for new companies and new technologies to emerge and ensures that broadband providers do not create undue burdens and cost barriers that can harm small businesses and undermine job growth.
- **Free Speech:** Net neutrality ensures that everyone with access to the internet can organize and share their opinions online equally, a key safeguard for our democracy. It ensures that ISPs are not arbiters of speech and expression online by favoring particular forums or providing enhanced access to specific content and audiences.
- **Equality of Access:** Net neutrality ensures that access to websites and content is based on individual preferences. This means content creators are not forced to pay ISPs for content distribution in order to reach consumers. It also means that end users are able to access all the content they desire without restrictions from ISPs. This allows all people in the U.S. to access essential healthcare services, educational resources, and employment opportunities and the freedom to choose from the full spectrum of online content. It means that a small church staffed by volunteers has the same opportunity to reach the public as a large media corporation with an unlimited budget. At a time when there is bipartisan agreement in Congress that we must increase internet access to all people and bridge the digital divide, the quality of this access is just as essential.

In order to promote continued economic, social, and political growth and innovation, it is imperative that the internet remain open and accessible to all people in the future. We strongly urge you and your colleagues to protect the free and open internet and the benefits it provides to for all people.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Monar

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